

Jefferson County Local Working Group Meeting 2017

February 16, 2017

Purpose of meeting discussion:

- Overview of strategic conservation concept
- Identify current natural resource issues and concerns
- Share partner efforts in natural resources
- Help NRCS identify future conservation implementation strategy areas

Resource Concerns:

- Irrigation Efficiency
 - NUID canal piping/large scale water savings
 - Foresight needed in building ponds to prevent repeated clearing. Silt basins need to be built in
 - Concerns with pump-back systems for those downstream depending on the tail water
 - Perhaps a storage and pump-back pilot project needs to be done
 - Increased pressure from shorter and shorter water, shifting crop preferences
 - **Where is the biggest bang for the buck? Should we move on from Agency Plains?**
 - Campbell Creek
 - Area above Cove Palisades
- Uplands
 - Invasive species, Juniper encroachment
 - Upper Willow Creek (John is working on projects in the area)
 - Long term strategies for the regrowth 5-6 years post-cut.
 - Burning?
- Soil Health/Tilth
 - Barriers include cost of new technologies
 - Cultural resistance
 - Farmers are in economic survival mode, difficult to feel the need to change
 - **Cover crops could be very valuable with shorter water years**
- Big Picture
 - Ag focus vs community focus
 - Get community buy in to values of healthy streams, utilize community groups, get mass involvement and buy in
 - Get government lawmakers to think about community carrying capacity
 - Plan at a watershed level

Discussion of ongoing efforts and programs

- JSWCD:
 - OWEB small grants
 - Planned out reach for irrigation needs on Agency Plains/Campbell Creek, OWEB grant
 - Willow Creek juniper clearing with USFS and Middle Deschutes Watershed council

- Outdoor education with MDWC,
 - Adam's on going stream restoration work in Trout Creek with BPA/Pelton
- NRCS programs
 - Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP): N. Agency Plains CIS, Seasonal High tunnel, Organic Initiative, Energy
 - Conservation Stewardship Program (CStP) provides 5 year contracts to producers with payments to support existing conservation efforts and incentives to apply new conservation. Applicants must meet conservation thresholds with their current management to be eligible New stewardship evaluation and planning concepts,